

THE  
INSCRIBED STONES AND ANCIENT CROSSES  
OF DEVON.

BY  
C. SPENCE BATE, F.R.S.

PART I.







THE  
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THE inscribed stones of Devonshire that remain are few, and most of those that are known stand in places to which they have been removed from their original sites.

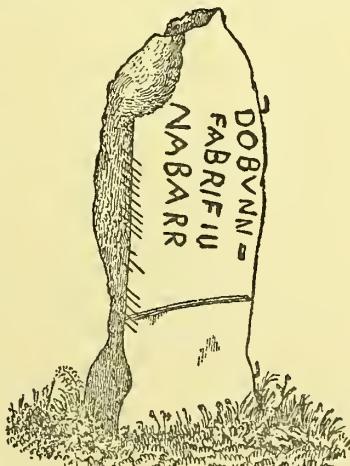
There are three in the garden of the vicarage at Tavistock. Two of these were brought from Buckland Monachorum, and the third from the neighbourhood of Tavistock. These were obtained, and erected for preservation, by the late Rev. E. A. Bray, a former vicar. Another inscribed stone was found some few years since by Mr. Pearse, at Fardel, near Cornwood. This was afterwards removed by the late Sir Edward Smirke, and is preserved in the British Museum. In Yealmpton churchyard is another, in tolerable preservation, as also is the one in the churchyard at Stowford.

Another exists, built into the wall, at Lustleigh. Nun's Cross, in the heart of Dartmoor, has an old inscription on it; and so has the one at Sourton, on the Okehampton Road.

Of these the first is one of the most interesting.

The NABARR Stone at one time fulfilled the duties of a gatepost. The iron clamps that supported the hinge still remain imbedded in the side. It stood in a field near the village of Buckland Monachorum, and

B



was with great difficulty obtained by the Rev. E. A. Bray, and removed to its present site in the vicarage garden at Tavistock. It has been described and figured in Bray's "Legends of Dartmoor." Its most interesting feature, the Ogham inscription, he was not aware of, and consequently has not noticed.

The Ogham characters are to Ireland what the Runic inscriptions are to the North, and the arrow-head or wedge-shaped figures are in Babylon and Persepolis. They are more capable of being understood than the cuneiform characters, but less known and deciphered than the Runes. Until recently they were supposed to have been an imposture of the bards. Of late, however, they have been more carefully studied, and considerable light has been thrown upon them.

Much has been written by students and historians of the country on this Ogham character, which was represented as the sole depository of the remaining Druidic learning in ancient Ireland. The concurring testimony of many centuries declared and authorized the fact, and accordingly its origin, history, and use were descended upon as matters of certainty, and its rules laid down in every Irish grammar; but previously to 1784 no one had ever seen it practically used, either on parchment or on any monument. Consequently doubts were urged against it; and it was only by the evidence of some unimpeachable inscriptions that the public could be brought to place reliance any longer on these oft-repeated assurances and statements. Lluyd had, in the beginning of the last century, mentioned an Ogham-inscribed monument which he had seen at Dingle; but his statement was unknown to the literary world. It was therefore with much satisfaction that the announcement was made, in 1784, to the Royal Irish Academy, of the discovery of a veritable Ogham inscription on Callan mountain.

Theophilus O'Flanagan, the alleged discoverer, was despatched with instructions to show it to Mr. Burton, and the report of that gentleman was satisfactory. He found the stone and the letters covered with lichens, an evidence that they could not have been a forgery of O'Flanagan or of the present generation.

In 1838, in a field immediately adjoining the high road in the pass of Duloe, near the lake of Killarney, some workmen accidentally broke into a cave whilst engaged in constructing a ditch. The cave consisted of a chamber, the walls of which were stones inclining inwards, having a roof of long transverse stones. In the

passage leading to the chamber were found several human bones and skulls. The stones that formed the roof had the angles marked with inscriptions of the Ogham character. The discovery formed a new era in our knowledge of the prehistoric writing of the Irish, by whom Ogham characters are stated to have been used long prior to the Christian era.

The alphabet consists of four series of scores, each series embracing five characters, and each letter being represented by one or more scores, but never more than five,—a circumstance suggestive of their having originated in signs made by the fingers, the digits on either side representing the fingers of the right or left hand respectively. The characters are placed on a line, which line is generally formed out of the corner or angle of the stone on which they are cut. This line is called a *fleasg*, and it is the number and position of the characters relative to this line that constitutes their value.



This line represents the alphabet; but different authors somewhat vary in their determination of the various letters; Dr. Ferguson doubting the correctness of those marked *ng* and *er*, while O'Hallan omits the letter *h*, and considers the doubtful *ng* to be the equivalent of the letter *r*. The formula consisted in the first place of sixteen letters only, which is considered to be strong evidence of its great antiquity, as this was also the number of the Phoenician, Pelasgic, Etruscan, and Celtarabian alphabets. The earliest piece of Ogham writing at present known is an ancient vellum MS. of the eleventh century, now preserved in the British Museum.



The vowels are represented by short lines or dots on the *fleasg*; the diphthongs by crosses, circles, and squares along the central line. The letter *p* is represented by a line longitudinal to the *fleasg*. These latter characters, represented in the second diagram, are stated to be of a later date. The writing has been called *craow*, or branch

Ogham, because it is supposed to bear a resemblance to that of a tree ; the *fleasg* answering to the trunk or stem, and the scores on either side, or passing through it horizontally or diagonally, corresponding to the branches. On the majority of the monuments on which it is found, the angle is used to form the *fleasg* (central stalk).

There are, I believe, only two cases known—the famous Callan stone, and one other—in which the median line is cut in the face of the stone, and the digits formed on each side instead of at the angle of the stone.

In Hall's "Ireland," to which work I am indebted for much descriptive information, an account of the Callan stone is given by Mr. Windele as it appeared in 1838, and as it appears to bear a close resemblance to some of the cromlechs on Dartmoor and in Cornwall, the following extract may prove acceptable :

" We ascended the mountain on the south-east side, following the course of an old road, or rather bridle-path, until we came in view of a lonely cromlech, an old altar of the sun (Grian), to which the whole mountain in Paynim times was consecrated. It consists of three immense stones—two of them pitched on end, and the third laid incumbent on these, and forming the great sacrificial stone. The latter measures twelve feet in length by four in breadth ; the others are each ten feet in length, eight broad, and one foot thick. Two more lie extended on the ground, closing, when erect, the extremities of the crypt, which the whole structure formed when complete. The interior had been recklessly excavated in search of treasure. The peasantry call this cromlech Altair na Greine, or 'altar of the sun,' and also Leabba Diarmuid agus Graine ; *i.e.* Diarmed and Grany's bed. Vallancey regards these as the names of the two Pagan deities of Ireland—one the god of arms, which Diarmit certainly signifies, and the other the sun itself ; but the romancers have reduced these celestial beings to more mundane proportions. They form a portion of the wonder-working, all-enduring personages of the multitudinous Fenian legends of Ireland, chanted in musical prose by the itinerant story-tellers of old, and in verse by a host of bards, who from the earliest times down to the sixteenth century gave forth such lays of marvels under the one well-known and attractive name of Ossian. Tales like these formed, and still form, the amusement of the long winter nights to the inhabitants of the wild mountain districts of Ireland, as well as of the Highlands of Scotland, and served as the grand staple

of those very beautiful but mendacious poems which Maepherson published in the early part of the reign of George III."

The stone in the garden of the vicarage of Tavistock is about four feet high, and eighteen inches broad on the inscribed face. It is nearly of the same proportion from top to bottom, but has been fractured a little at the summit, and has a somewhat rounded top. The inscription on the stone is perpendicular, in three lines, and reads, "Dobunni Fabrii fili Ennabarri," according to Mr. Bray and Dr. Ferguson, but I have failed to perceive the EN at the commencement, or the terminal letter I of this word.

During the summer of 1873, Dr. Ferguson, of Dublin, visited and took a cast of this stone, on which Mrs. Ferguson detected some Ogham writing. On his return to Dublin, Dr. Ferguson carefully deciphered the markings. The result of his examination he published in a paper read before the Royal Irish Academy, and it is embodied in the following abstract:

"The Ogham inscriptions of South Britain (understanding at present Wales and Devonshire) are distinguished from those of Scotland and Ireland, by being almost always accompanied by corresponding legends in the Roman character, and so, like the Rosetta stone, carrying their keys within themselves.

"Prior to 1870, the values of almost all letters of the South British Ogham alphabet had been ascertained in this manner. There remained only P, F, L, D, which were problematical, and B, which had not been found at all, to be identified.

"In December, 1870, it was pointed out that the equivalent of P was found in a certain combination of Ogham digits on the monument to *Turpili* at Crickhowel. F and L might be inferred from *fil*, the Oghamic equivalent of *filii* on the Tralony legend, as also F and D from their use in the name (*Dofst a ceos*) on the Tycoed monument, of which a cast was made in 1872, disclosing hitherto unobserved portions both of the Oghamic and of the correlative Latin inscription.

"The identification of B alone was required to complete the independent key to this class of Ogham characters. This has been accomplished by the discovery of an Ogham inscription on the angle of the well-known Dobunni monument from Buckland Monachorum, now preserved at Tavistock.

"The leading characters of the name *enabarri* of the Latin text are still legible in the Ogham *nabarr*, and the Oghamic representa-

tive of *B* is so ascertained without resorting to any external proof.

“External corroboration is however found abundantly in the substantial agreements of the results with those derived from the Irish lapidary Ogham texts, many of which ‘echo’ formulæ found in Latin inscriptions, and in one Ogham legend in South Britain. The manuscript keys to the Ogham alphabet preserved in the Irish books differ in one material respect from the South British, and from the generality of Irish lapidary texts, but agree with the Scottish examples; and the South British texts being older than the manuscripts, an inference arises that the Scottish Oghams are more recent than the others.”

The following represents the Oghamic inscription on the stone :



The stone is irregularly square, and probably represents some old boundary mark.

There are three names in three lines, and the inscription may be read as being in memory of Dobunnus Faber, the son of Ennabarrus; or, according to Mr. Bray, of Dobunnus the smith, the son of Ennabarrus; or of Faber, the son of Ennabarrus, one of the Dobuni.

Faber in later ages was no uncommon name, and meant a skilful workman in any art (more particularly in metal; for Faber has more especial reference to a smith or worker of iron). It would be of paramount importance in barbarous ages, that a man’s trade or occupation would naturally become, not only an addition, but in itself a proper name; and probably it is so in this case, just as that of Smith in our own. It is also probable, Mr. Bray thought, that the first name in the inscription may have been that of his people.

According to Henry (p. 32), a part of the Dobuni submitted to the Romans. These were probably the subjects of Cogidunus, who became a great favourite of Claudius and succeeding emperors for his early submission and steady adherence to their interests.

Camden says that the Cassii had conquered the Dobuni before the arrival of Cæsar, who made the prince of this country commander-in-chief of the forces of the whole island.

This tribe inhabited Gloucestershire and Oxfordshire. They are supposed to have derived their name *Duffen*, a British word signi-

fying deep or low, because they inhabited for the most part a plain encompassed by hills.

Whether the name on the stone be that of an individual or of a nation, it certainly is, says Mr. Bray, of British origin.

“The inscription,” Dr. Ferguson says, “is remarkable as being all in Roman capitals—a criterion thought to bespeak a higher antiquity than where capitals and minuscules are intermingled, as is the case in most of the ‘bi-literals’ of South Wales.” (Pres. Royal Irish Academy, Nov. 29th, 1873.)

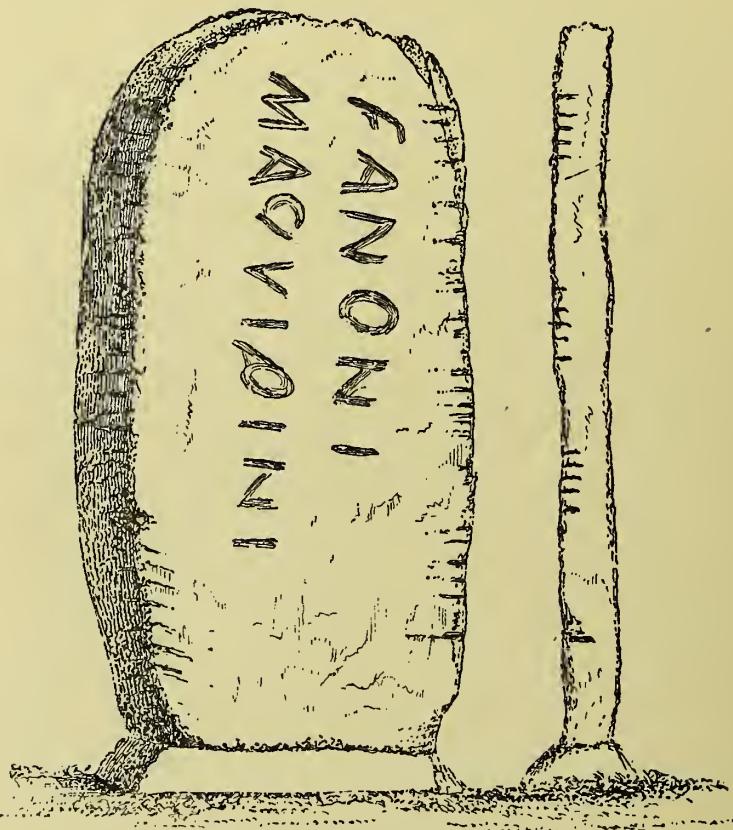
Hübner, who has given only the Roman inscription in page 10 of his recently published work, *Inscriptiones Britanniæ Christianæ*, 1876, and appears not to have been able to obtain a drawing of the Ogham inscription upon the same stone, of which he knows neither the form nor dimensions, remarks, “In angulo litteræ Celticæ scriptæ sunt, quarum imaginem nancisci non potui. Formam lapidis depictam non habui mensuramque eius ignoro. S. Ferguson, Archæol. Camb. sec. iv. 5, 1874, p. 92; et I. Rhys, ibid, p. 173, cf. p. 334 adn. Is mihi ectypum misit litterarum, quod hic repetendum curavi. Litterarum Celticarum has tautum

... NABARR ...

Rhys legit, diverse a religuis; ut mihi significavit per litteras. Idem lapide denuo inspecto *filii* potius quam *filii* legendum putat.”

On the reverse side are the letters G. C., which Mr. Bray presumes may stand for Galba Cæsare. But I can see little to induce us to follow Mr. Bray in this, except in his quoting from Shakespeare the following lines :

“ Figures pedantical, these summer flies  
Have blown me full of maggot ostentation:  
I do forswear them.”



FARDEL STONE.

The next stone to which I shall draw attention is that which was found some few years since lying over a little brook close to Fardel farm-house, once the mansion and inheritance of the family of the celebrated Raleigh. We are indebted for the preservation of this interesting stone to the care of the late Sir Edward Smirke, who gave a description of it in the *Transactions of the Royal Institution of Cornwall* for 1861. It is to that article I am indebted for most of the information respecting it. The stone has been removed through his instrumentality from the yard at Fardel to the British Museum, where it is now preserved. It is six feet three inches long, two feet ten inches broad, and seven inches thick.

This was the first stone found in England with an Ogham inscription. A few have been noticed in Scotland, and also in Wales, where the inscription of the stone at St. Dogmaels assimilates to this. It also shows an interesting interchange of the Roman *Filius* with the Irish *Mac*, for while the Roman inscription on the face reads

“Sangranus filius Cunotami,”

the Ogham writing on the margin of the stone is

“Sangramnus maqi Cunotami.”

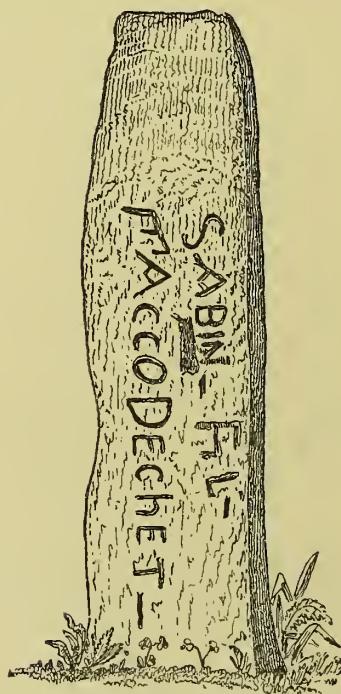
On the Fardel stone before us, the Maq is introduced both in the Roman and the Ogham inscriptions.

On one side of the stone is engraven the word “Sagranui,” and on the other “Fanoni Maqvirini,” but it has been read somewhat differently in the Ogham inscription, where the fifth letter appears to be equivalent to “q” and the seventh to “c.” The “u” is moreover omitted, as it does not necessarily follow the letter “q,” as is the case in the Roman language. Thus instead of Maqvirini, we have Maqiqici; or, as Mr. Brash thinks it not impossible that portions of the fifth symbol may have been destroyed, and consequently it might have corresponded with the letter in the Roman inscription, it would read Maqirici. Thus we have a record to the memory of Fanonus, the son of Virinus, in the Roman inscription, and of Fanon, the son of Iricus, in the other.

The interest which these stones have exists in the fact that the symbol of another language—the Gadelic, or ancient Erse, or Irish language—once existed here.

Hübner in his *Inscriptiones Britanniae Christianae* (p. 9) has given the legend as slightly different, and writes, “*Fanoni reliqui et imago mea eos secuta; sed quod I. Rhys me monuit, scilicet Fanoni clare legit, confirmaverunt a me rogati amici musei Britannici.*”—A. W. Franks et A. S. Munay.

“*Literas Celticas Rhys nunc et ita legit; Svaqquci maqi Qicii putatque nomen Svaqquci componendum esse cum chwap, quick hodierno.*”



SABINE STONE.

Another of the stones now standing in the rectory garden at Tavistock, was brought from the parish of Buckland Monachorum, where it did duty in supporting the roof of a blacksmith's shop.

This monument is in tolerable preservation. A hole about six inches long by two wide and four deep is cut in the centre, and interferes with the inscription. And Mr. Bray argues, that as the terminal letters are made smaller than the others, in consequence of the excavation occupying a part of the position required by larger letters, it is quite evident that the hole must have been made in the stone anterior to the cutting of the inscription; consequently the stone must have been in use for some other purpose before it was made available for a rude stone monument.

The inscription is, *SABINI FILI MACCODECHETI* (in memory of Sabinus the son of Odecheti, or Maccodocheti). The stone is about six feet eight inches above the ground, and one foot six inches wide.

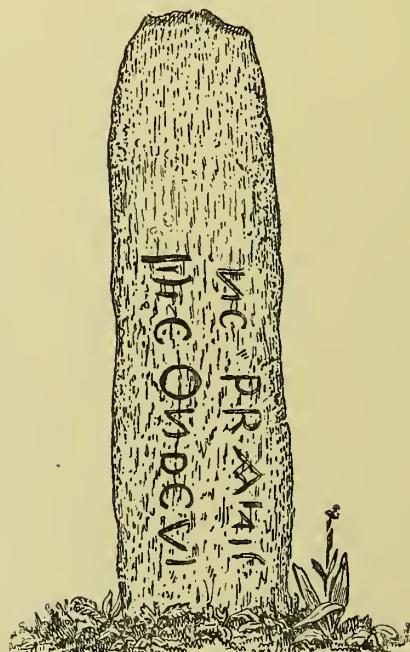
The inscription appears to have been recently touched for the purpose of making the letters more distinct.

The Mac is present in this inscription as well as the Roman filius, a circumstance which exhibits evidence that the monument was erected when the prefix Mac was losing its distinguished feature, and was becoming incorporated as part of the name.

There is still in Cornwall the name of Odogherty. It would be curious if this should be the modern representative of the Odechetti of this ancient rude monument, the Mac being only a prefix signifying the "son of."

Dr. Ferguson remarks (Royal Irish Academy, November 29th and December 8th, 1873), that "the value of this inscription, although unaccompanied by any Ogham as corroborative of the proofs already adduced, consists in this, that the name or designation which it presents is 'echoed,' so to speak, in several instances by Irish Ogham texts read by the same key. The first of these, which for many years has been in the Academy's lapidary museum, comes from Corkaquinny in Kerry. It bears the legend *Maqqi Decedda* on one side, and *Maqqi Catufi[r]* on the other. The second lies in that rich repository of Ogham inscriptions, the disused burying-ground of Ballintagart, near Dingle, also in Kerry. Its legend reads on one side, *Magi Deceod[a]*; and on the other, *Caqosi Ceceudo[ros]*. The third is at Killen-Cormac in Kildare, noticed by Mr. Shearman in our proceedings, *loc. cit.* (vol. ix. p. 253), and there are others elsewhere which I have not myself seen. This argument has lately been pressed on the attention of the Welsh Archaeologists by Mr. Brash, who has compared the Irish examples with the legend, *ie jacet Maccudecetti*, at Penros Llygwy in Anglesea. But it has been assumed that the Penros monument commemorates a known personagé, Machutus son of Eecwyd. Such an explanation seems difficult of application to the very Irish sounding *Sarin*, as I would read it of the Maccudechetti monument at Tavistock. What may be the meaning of the name or designation I do not pretend to explain. If it were confined to Ireland, one might suppose it to designate a person of a particular family, as in the case, for example, of *Duftac Maculugar*, the contemporary of St. Patrick; but it is hard to conceive how the family of the clan *Degaid* could have spread into Anglesea and Devon, unless indeed it should appear that they were a family in religion, and that the formula indicated an order."

Hübner gives the legend as *Sarini fili macco decheti*, and writes, "De nomine, cf. S. Ferguson, *Archeol. Cambr.* sec. iv. 5, 1874, p. 92, *Sarin* legibatur, potest autem etiam *Sabin* esse non *Sagin*, ut recte observavit Rhys."



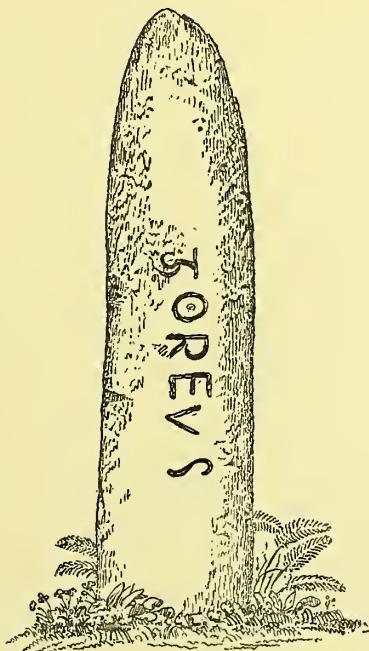
NEPRANUS STONE.

The third stone preserved in the rectory garden was rescued by the late Rev. E. A. Bray from the perilous position of a clam or bridge over a river. Fortunately the inscription was turned face downwards, so that it was preserved from destruction.

The inscription appears to be—NEPRANI FILI CONBEVI (in memory of Nepranus, the son of Conbevus).

The stone is five feet eight inches above the ground, and one foot eight inches wide.

It is figured as *Conbevi* in Hübner's *Inscriptiones Britanniae Christianæ* (p. 10), where the author says, “*Condevi reliqui, Conbevi Rhys, qui putat nomen idem esse atque Cynfyw recentius.*”



YEALMPTON STONE.

In the churchyard at Yealmpton is an inscribed stone, for a sketch of which I am indebted to Mr. C. W. Dymond, c.e. He says that the stone is of granite, and that in the back are sunk three rectangular holes a few inches apart in a line, and each about  $4'' \times 3''$ . They are evidently modern, and have no doubt been made to fix fencing in. I have understood that this stone, like many others of the kind, was prostrate for a long time, and was only re-erected within recent times, hence probably the legibility of the inscription. The drawing has been made from careful measurements, and is, I believe, an accurate representation of the object.

The height is six feet four inches from the surface of the ground, and its breadth at the base is one foot eight inches. The top of the stone is rounded to an obtuse point, and the inscription engraved in Saxon letters is the word *Toreus*. About one mile distant is a village called Torr.

I am also indebted to Mr. Worth, the historian of Plymouth,

for another sketch and measurement. He states that the stone, "as far back as its history can be traced, seems to have lain for centuries in the churchyard of Yealmpton village," and that the inscription is "evidently the name of some Roman or Romanised Britain whose sepulture is commemorated. There has been," he continues, "a suggestion that there was some connection between the bearer of this name and the Torey Brook at Plympton."

The stone is of granite, and the inscribed face has been more carefully hewn than the other sides.

The Rev. W. Iago, who has given some attention to the inscribed stones in Cornwall, says that this Yealmpton stone has been figured in the *Gentleman's Magazine*. He moreover thinks that the first letter is the Saxon G , not T , and that the name is "Goreus," and not "Toreus."

Sir Edward Smirke (*Trans. Royal Inst. of Cornwall*, 1861, p. 21) says that "it has been read differently by Polwhele and Mr. Westwood" in vol. viii. of the *Archæological Journal*.

Hübner, in his *Inscriptiones Britannicae Christianæ* (p. 9), has given a figure of this stone, and interprets the legend as Goreus, but says, "Lectio non usquequaque certa," and represents a figure of a St. Andrew's cross on that portion of the stone which is beneath the ground, adding, "Crucis iacentis signum infra additum fortasse recentius est," giving as his authority the *Archæological Journal*, 1851, p. 424.



STOWFORD STONE.

This stone stands close on the wall as one enters the gate of the churchyard at Stowford. It is boat-shaped, if we may assume the portion beneath the surface of the ground to resemble that above it. The surface on which the inscription is cut is flat, being widest towards the lower part, and gradually narrowing to the apex. The sides of the stone slope towards each other, so as to approximate the form of a boat's keel. It is five feet four inches above the ground, and one foot two inches in the broadest part.

The inscription consists of eight or nine letters, placed vertically one over the other, while each letter appears to lie horizontally in relation to the others. It was first observed by Polwhele, but has never been satisfactorily determined.

Hübner (*l.c.* p. 11) gives a very poor figure, and writes, "cippus rudis, litteris fugientibus." He gives the legend as *Gurgles* (?). "Tertium vero et ultimum elementum incerta *r* et *s* indicare." But a recent careful inspection induces me to believe it to read *Guniglei*.



LUSTLEIGH STONE.

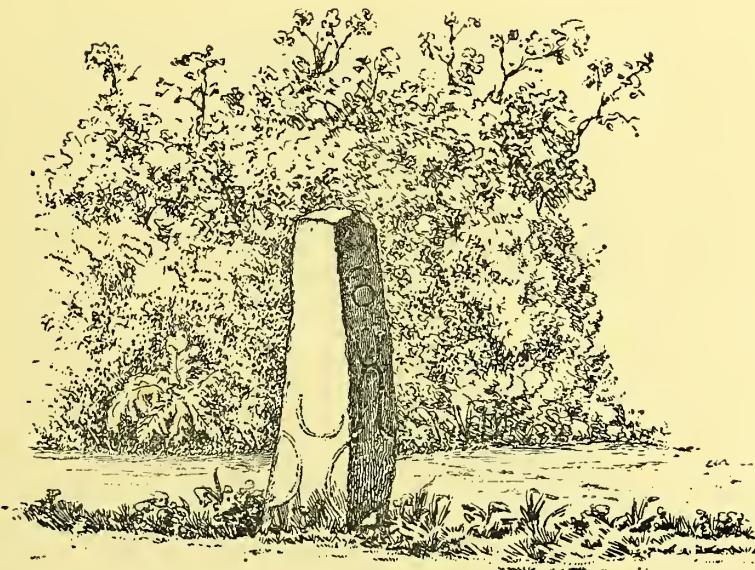
This stone is figured in Lysons' *Magna Britannia*, vol. v. (Devonshire) p. 309, and is copied therefrom in his *Inscriptiones Britanniae Christianae* (Devonshire), p. 11, by Hübner, who says, "Lectio incerta."

It lies at this time as when Lysons observed it, at the door of the main entrance into Lustleigh Church.

The stone is four feet long by fourteen inches wide; the extreme ends are covered by the two pilasters that form the doorway.

The door is double, and as one half only appears to be generally open, the stone at the eastern end is the more worn and polished, so that the inscription is gradually becoming less distinct, the last letter in the second row being entirely obliterated since Lysons described, in 1822.

Having recently examined the stone, and compared the drawing then made with care upon the spot with Lysons' figure, I feel assured that the two first letters of the inscription represent "c" and "a." The former of these Lysons distinctly figures as "d"; but the markings on the surface of the stone above the body of the letter appear to be without design, and it accordingly reads, "catvidoc conrino," to which Lysons adds the letter "c" as the termination of the second word. The stone lies imbedded in mortar outside the wooden door-sill of the church, and is trodden by all who enter.



STONE NEAR STICKLEPATH.

*(Southern side.)*

On the road from Sticklepath to Okehampton, about one mile distant from the former, stands an upright granite post, at a point where another road joins it. The stone is about four feet six inches high, one foot six inches broad at the base of the north and south sides, and eleven inches across the top. The east and west sides are about half the width of the others. Three of the sides are ornamented with figures engraven in the surface; but some of the lines are much weathered.

The southern side appears to have been much injured by this means, so much so that no ornamentation is visible for the first half from the top, which appears to have been fractured off. The lower half is sculptured with three semicircles, which have their convex sides approximating to each other, but equidistantly separated: one upon each side, and the third above.

The western face is but seven inches broad, and has no markings: either they are all weathered away, or there were none there. The eastern side has lines that bear a resemblance to an imperfect

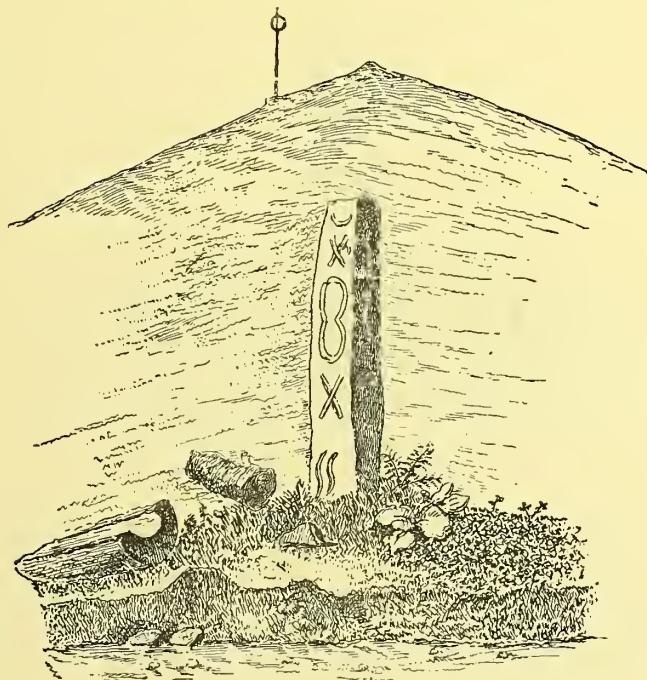


STONE NEAR STICKLEPATH.

*(Northern side.)*

human figure with a halo round the head. This face is eight inches across. About eleven inches from the top, the segment of a circle, with the convex side upwards, crosses the stone from margin to margin. A few inches below, is a circle of about five inches in diameter; beneath this is an oval, seven inches long, which has the upper portion obliterated. From the lower margin of the oval two waved lines are produced, each similar in form, but reversed to one another, and terminating at the edge of the stone, about one foot from the ground.

The northern side is more perfect, and is furnished with figures from the bottom to the top; there are two small circles, one above the other, about an inch and a half in diameter, the uppermost being broken, through the fractured stone. A few inches further down is a circle of eleven inches in diameter. At the lower part commence, at the edges of the stone, two lines that form a St. Andrew's cross, which reaches nearly to the base of the stone.



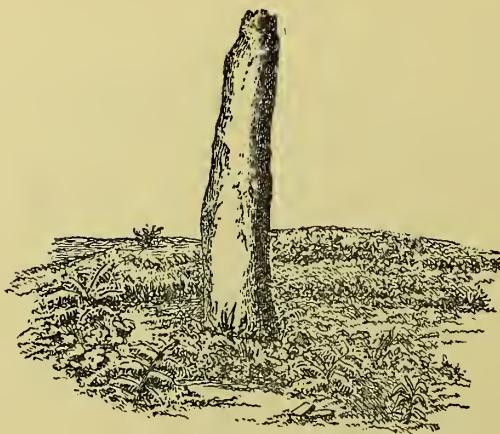
LADYWELL.

Near the village of Sticklepath, not far from an old fountain from which the inhabitants continue to draw water, stands an upright, squarely-hewn stone, known by the name of Ladywell.

On the north face a cross stands in relief, the top of which is surmounted by a round knob, from which, to the arms of the cross, the distance is one foot six inches, while from the lower part of the arms, which are nine inches broad, to the lower extremity of the shaft of the sculptured cross is one foot.

The eastern face is sculptured from the summit to the base of the stone. The uppermost engraving is about half a circle, the upper half being wanting. Below this semicircle is a small St. Andrew's cross, beneath which is a cartouche-like ornament. It is of a long, oval shape, with a contraction of the sides near the middle. Beneath this again is a second St. Andrew's cross, below which are two conformable waved lines like the letter S.

The height of the stone from the ground is five feet four inches.



MAXIMAJOR STONE.

Maximajor is an upright Stone, a rudely-hewn piece of granite, about six feet high and one foot six inches at the base, gradually tapering to a round pointed apex, which is much weathered. It stands near a cross roadway on Marsden Common, about three miles from Moretonhampstead, and a quarter of a mile from the ancient barrow called the Giant's Grave.

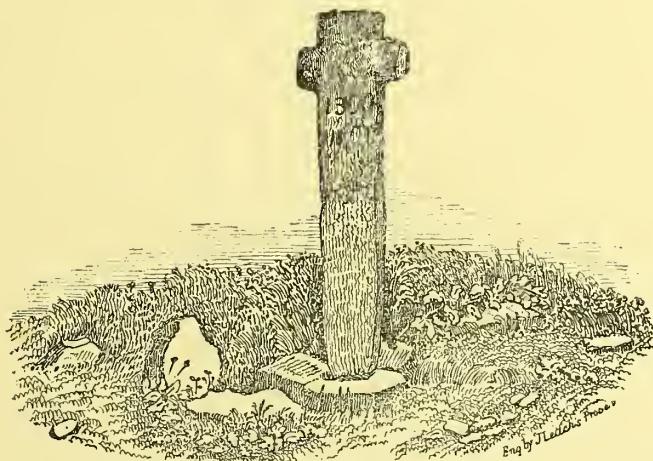
Whether it was ever an inscribed stone or not it is difficult to determine; but the lad who directed me to it said he thought that it was placed there because some one had been murdered, or committed suicide, and been buried there.

The solitary stone pillar, or Maen Hir, appears to have been an object or emblem of worship in many nations, inclusive of the Irish.

The Elgabal, which Heliogabalus adored, was a cone-shaped stone. Eusebius, from the Phoenician annals, relates that *Usous* consecrated two columns—one to fire, the other to air.

The Romans used to swear “*per Jovem lapidum.*” The original Mercury and Bacchus of Greece were unhewn stones, and the Paphian Venus was a pyramidal white-stone. These upright stones were set up for several purposes.

Jacob and other holy men set up pillars of unhewn stone to commemorate especial events. In Ireland the Pillar-stone is called the Dallan: it is sometimes single and sometimes set in groups. It is generally put up for worship, a Phallus; sometimes as a monument to commemorate the site of a battle, or the grave of a hero or chief.



NUN'S CROSS.

The Crosses of Devonshire may be divided into Moorland, Road-side, and Church Crosses.

The Moorland are very rudely executed, being roughly hewn out of the native granite. These appear to be the most ancient, and were most probably erected on, or sculptured out of, some older monuments of historic interest or religious association.

The roadside crosses are of different character, some being rudely executed, and others more carefully hewn. Most of these have the emblem of the cross engraven on the side towards the road. The more recent have the corners chamfered, after the manner of the sixteenth century crosses. All these fulfilled the double purposes of wayside Calvaries and directing-posts, and were generally placed where two or more roads met.

The churchyard crosses were most probably erected at the spot where the priest officiated previously to the erection of the church. The cross generally stands a little beyond the limits of the churchyard; and in those cases where it is within, has probably been removed at some recent period.

Of all the moorland crosses, the earliest to which we can fix a date is that now known as Nun's Cross. It was one of the boundary-marks of the Perambulation of Dartmoor Forest, made during the reign of Henry III., in the year 1240, and was then known as Siward's Cross.

A curious paragraph is to be found written at the end of one of the documents describing the Perambulation, and is as follows: "hit is to be noatid that on the one syde of the crosse abouesaid their is graven in the stone CRUX SIWARDI; and on the oth. side is graven, ROOLANDI."

The remains of these words are still partially visible on the stone as well as a small incised cross in the centre. To all appearance, after several visits and close examinations made both by friends and myself, on one side the word appears to be *Booford*, and on the other we could only decipher the terminal syllable—*ward*.

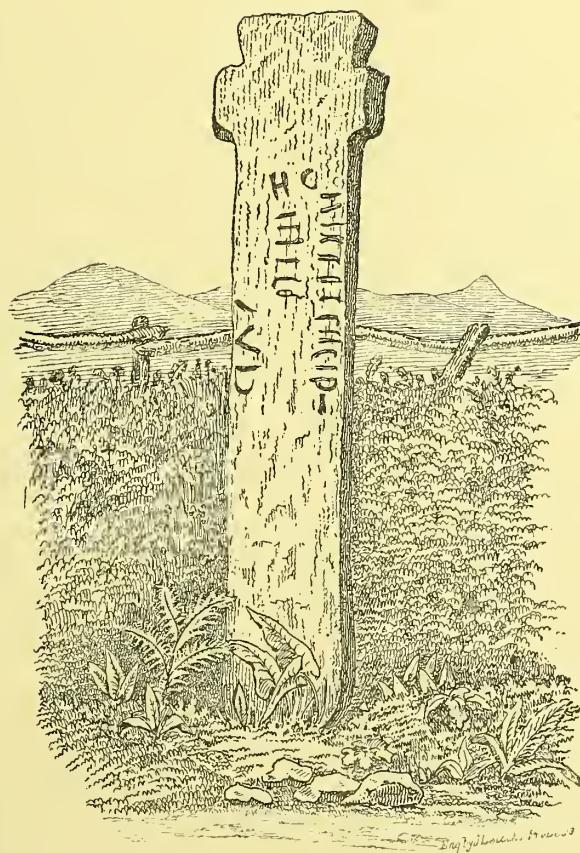
It is now commonly known as Nun's Cross; but why so named, or why it has lost the name by which it was formerly known, we have no evidence to show.

According to the *Handbook of Devon*, this cross formed one of the boundary marks of Buckland Abbey, and is mentioned as Crux Sywardi in the Charter of Isabella de Fortibus. It marked the "bonde" between the Royal Forest and the Monks' Moor.

It is a rough granite structure, rather larger at the top than the base, where the shaft is inserted in a pedestal level with the ground.

It was, I believe, for some time thrown down; but when the line between the boundary of the forest and the outlying moors was re-defined, the cross was re-erected. It has been broken and repaired by iron clamps. In the map of the first perambulation it is figured as standing upon a pedestal of two steps.

It is probable, as the monument bears two old inscriptions, that the cross was formed out of an old inscribed stone that recorded the burial-place of some prehistoric heroes.



SOURTON CROSS.

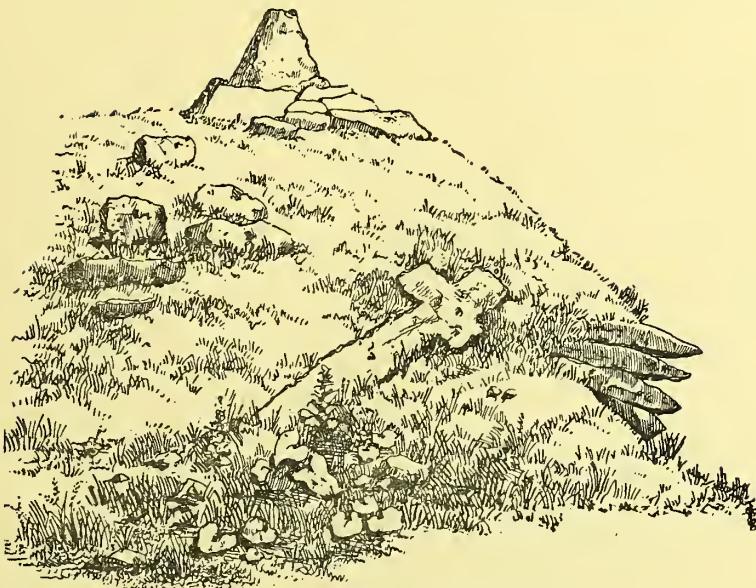
Near the village of Sourton, on the high road from Tavistock to Okehampton, is a large cross. It stands eight feet two inches above the ground, and is one foot five inches wide. The arms of the cross project but a few inches beyond the shaft. It is a square-cut

monument of the simplest type, and resembles the moorland crosses of the earliest dates.

On the four sides below the cross are cut the letters H. L. T. O., which refer to boundaries of Hatherleigh, Lydford, Tavistock, and Okehampton. On the western face of the stone, that on which the letter "H" is engraven, the remains of an almost illegible inscription, graven in three lines, traversing the perpendicular direction of the stone, are still to be distinguished. The very slight extent by which the arms project, being only about an inch beyond the widest part of the stone, and the oblique direction at which the sides incline inwards to the base of the arms, are strongly suggestive that this cross was executed out of an old inscribed monument.

In the village of Sourton, near the church, still exists the pedestal on which a cross once stood, but of which the inhabitants appear to have no recollection.

Lying on the ground, and built into the wall of a neighbouring house, are several (I counted eleven in all) small stone pillars, that may have formed part of some structure over the cross.



RIPPON TOR CROSS.

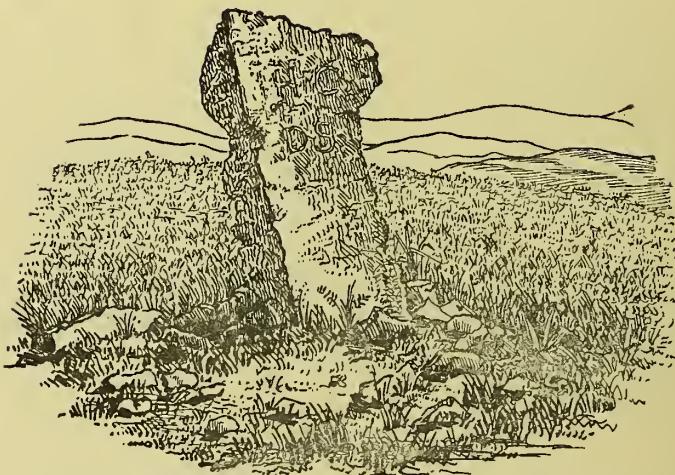
On the northern side of Rippon Tor, on the face of the slope, overgrown with heather and wild thyme, there lies embedded in the turf an ill-cut cross. On removing the moss and plants that are struggling to entomb it, I found it to have been cut in relief upon the mass of granite that lies below.

This cross could not have been intended, as most of the moorland crosses undoubtedly were, to serve as guiding the pathway over a desolate region. I therefore believe that it was sculptured at a period when the sign of the cross was thought to bring a blessing, as a symbol of good that should drive away all evil from a spot that had probably been much noted for unhallowed rites.

I think there can be but little doubt that many of the older moorland crosses were placed in accordance with an order from Pope Gregory, that the symbol of the Christian religion should be engravened on the records of heathen superstition.

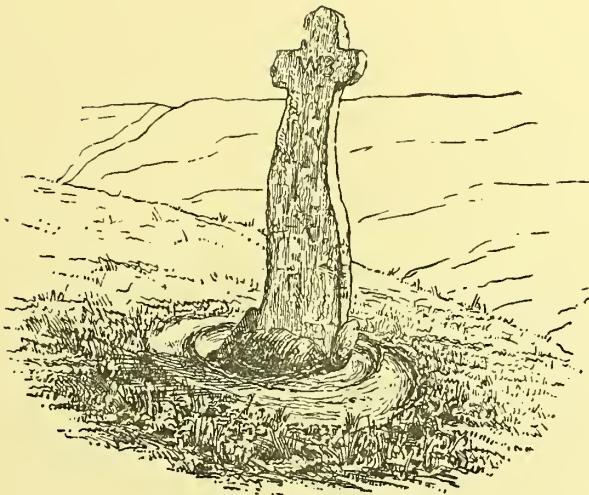
On Rippon Tor are two or three large cairns, from one of which a causeway leads to an overhanging rock. May not this last have been the scene of human holocausts, and the causeway the path by which the victim was carried to the cairn?

Farther down the hill there is a large logan stone.



HAMILDON CROSS.

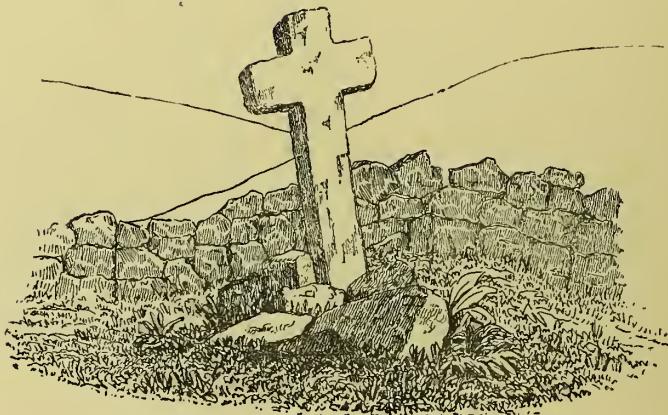
This relic of a past age stands on the western brow of Hamildon Down, between Broad Barrow and Hamildon Tor. It is one of the most rudely-executed crosses on the moor. For many years it was partially buried in the soil on which it fell, and in 1839 was replaced as a boundary mark defining the extent of the Duke of Somerset's property in this direction, his lordship having engraved on it the letters H.C., D.S., 1839, for Hamildon Cross, Duke of Somerset.



VITIFER CROSS.

This is a rudely-executed cross about four feet six inches in height; it is broader at the base than at the summit, and the shaft is crooked, and planted sloping in the ground. The letters W.B. are carved on one side.

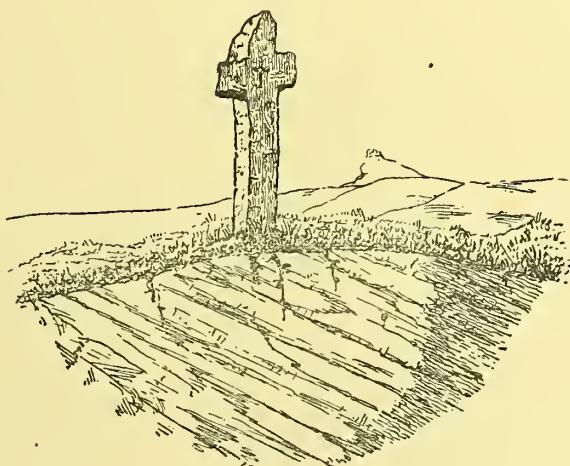
This cross is situated below the King's Oven, formerly known as "Ye Furnum Regis," and not far from one of the most extensive tin mines and stream works on the Moor, which bears the same name. From its appearance it should be among the older forms on the Moor.



HUNTINGTON CROSS

Is a tolerably evenly-formed cross, about four feet eight inches high, with arms of tolerable proportions. It is situated on the Avon, and forms a bound-mark of the forest limits.

It stands near a very extensive ancient tin stream work, as well close to the track-road that is known as the Abbot's Way.

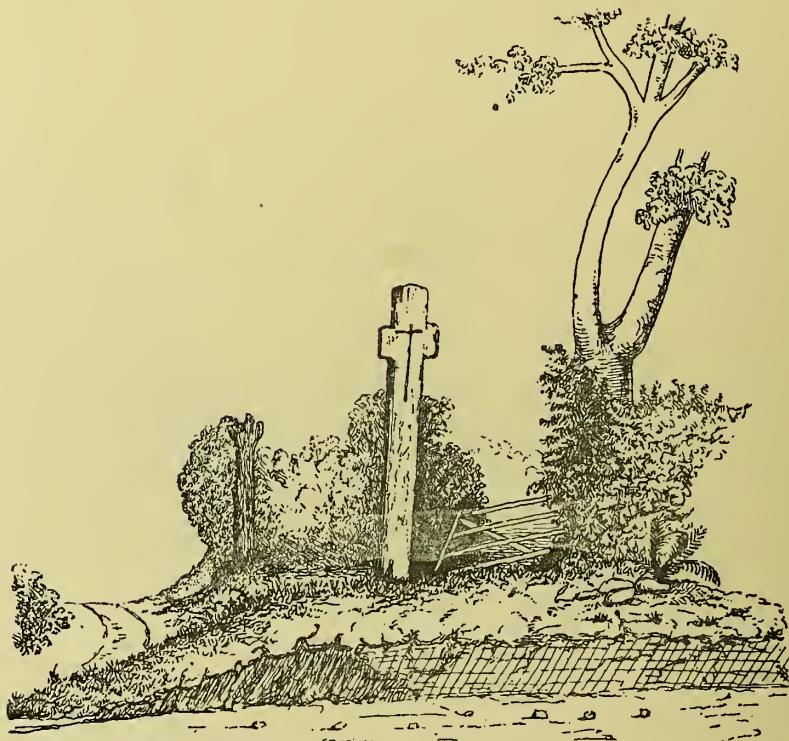


WHITCHURCH.

On Whitchurch Down, on the very edge of a quarry, stands an old rude square-cut granite cross. The eastern face is hewn flat. The opposite side is very roughly hewn.

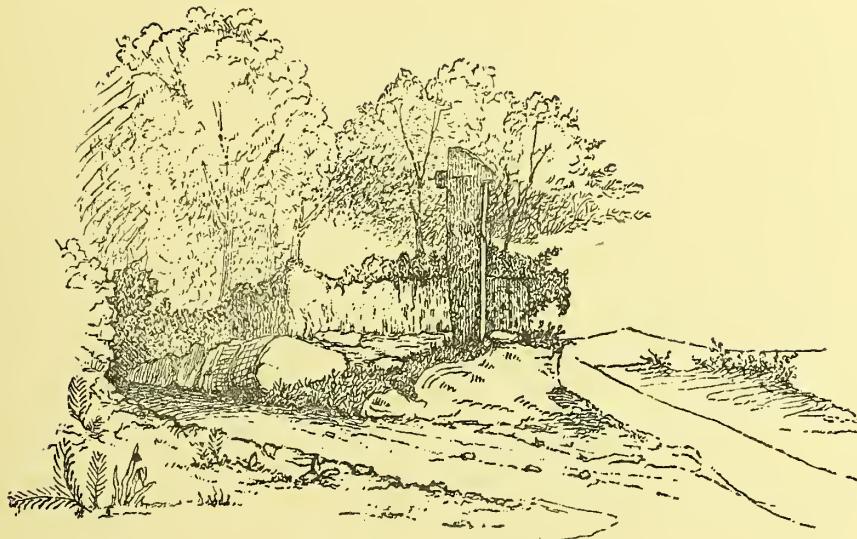
In the centre of the cross is a small cross deeply engraved.

The height of the stone is about four feet six inches, and the length of each arm about nine inches.



MEAVY BRIDGE CROSS.

On the road from Shaugh to Meavy, just where the road to Sheepstor turns up the valley by the side of the Meavy river, stands a rudely cut granite cross. It is upwards of six feet in height. The arms are short; and on the western face, being that which is directed to the road, is engraven a simple cross, the arms being above the centre of those of the outer cross, while the shaft reaches considerably below the lower line of the arms.

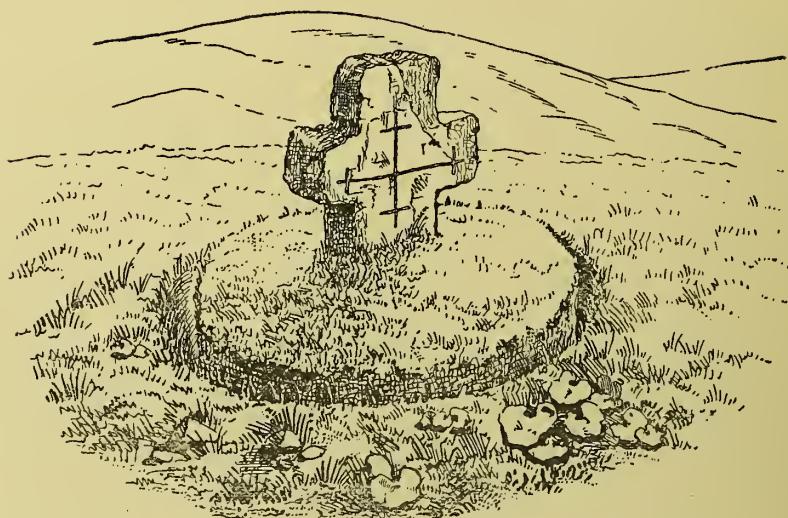


HORRABRIDGE CROSS.

On the road from Horrabridge to Sampford Spiney, where it is crossed by a road from Walkhampton to Tavistock, is a roughly hewn granite cross about six feet in height. It has the western face, being that directed towards the road, cut smoother than the other sides, with a linear cross engraven on it, the shaft being considerably longer than the arms.

The head of this stone has been slightly fractured.

This much resembles Meavy Bridge Cross, but is somewhat more roughly hewn. It stands on the same line of road between Walkhampton and Meavy.



CADOVER BRIDGE.

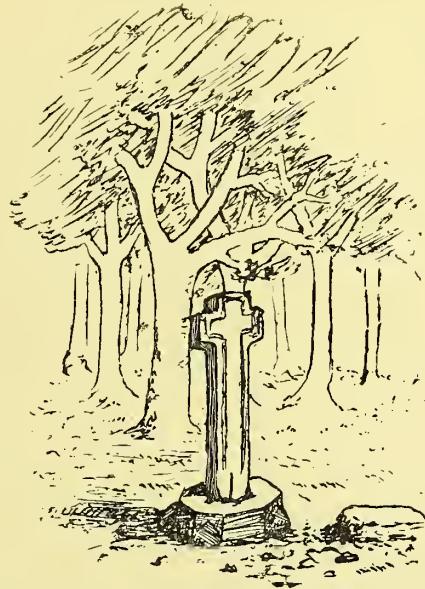
At Cadover Bridge stands a cross that had long been fallen.

During the military manœuvres of 1873 the soldiers replaced it, burying the shaft deeply in the soil, and cutting a trench round it.

Close outside the trench they placed a directing-post, with a hand pointing to the river Plym just below. On the post was written, "Watering-place of the 1st Battery of Artillery."

The cross is squarely cut, and roughly hewn. It is about nineteen inches above the ground, the arms are about six inches long, and the edges are weathered round.

The face of the stone, which now stands south, is flat, and on the surface is engraved a cross which has the extremity of each limb intersected by a line that forms another cross.

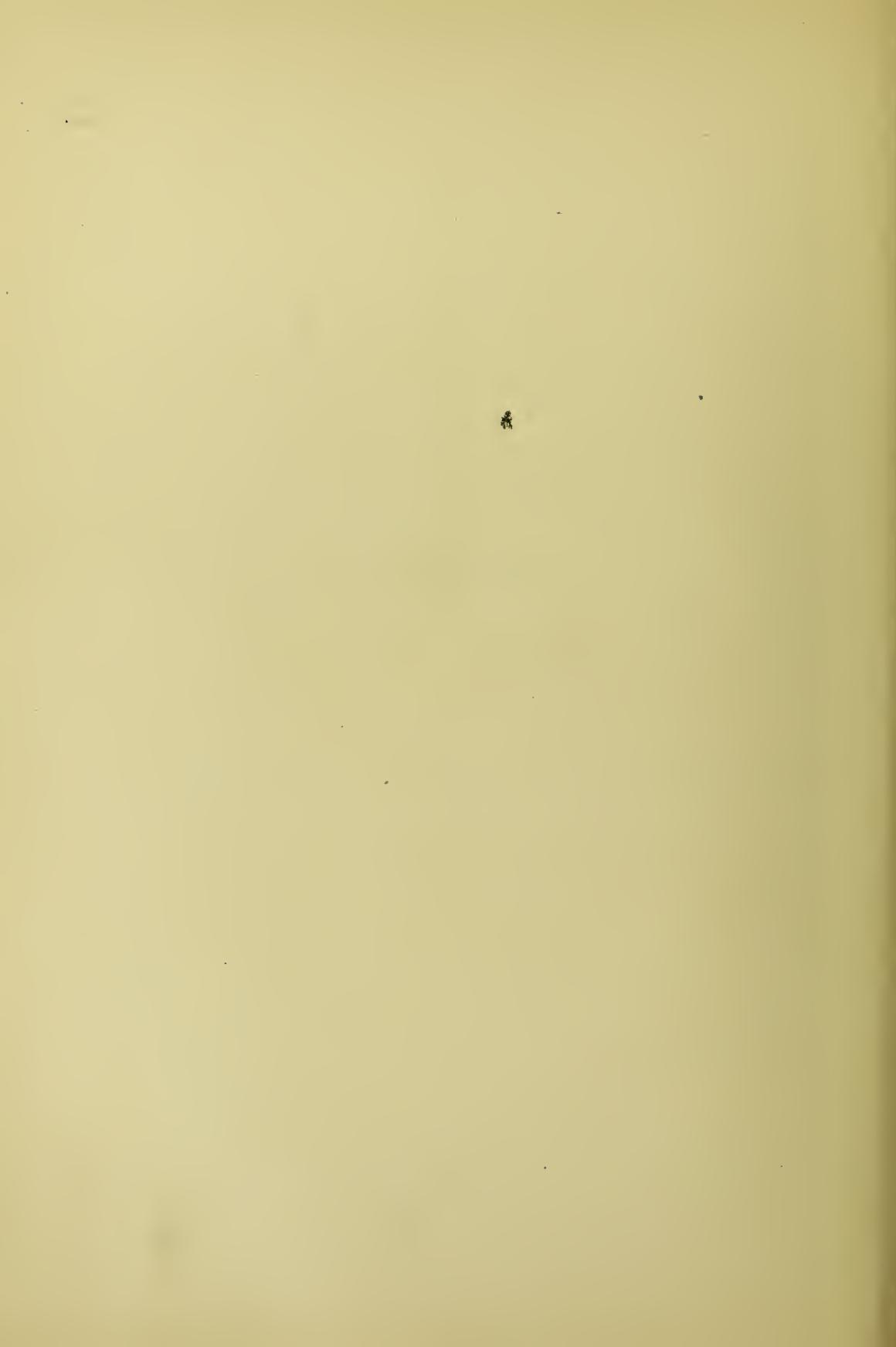


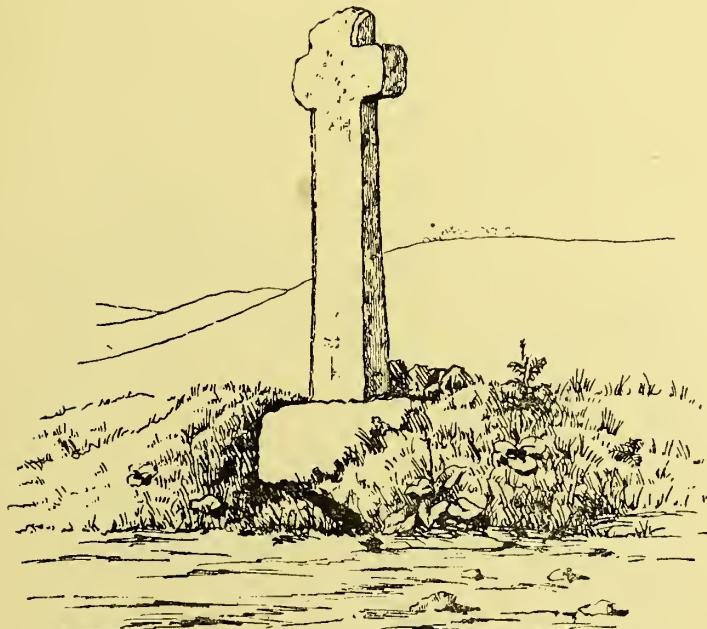
THE  
INSCRIBED STONES AND ANCIENT CROSSES  
OF DEVON.

BY  
C. SPENCE BATE, F.R.S.

PART II.







LEE MOOR.

On the road from Cornwood to Meavy, a short way from the Lee Moor Clay Works, where it forms a conspicuous object, is a cross by the side of the road. It has been down, and been replaced. It is about five feet six inches high, and stands on a square flat stone pedestal.

This cross has the angles carefully bevelled or chamfered off. One arm and the summit have been injured, or much weather-beaten.

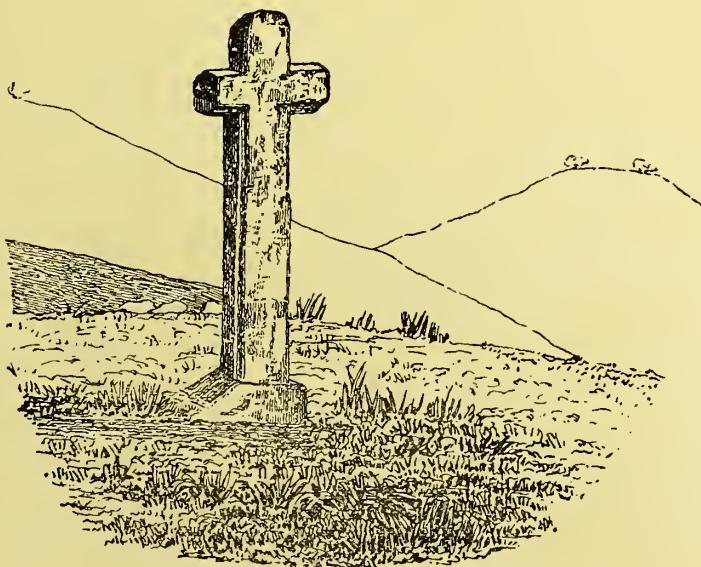
This stone is known generally in the neighbourhood by the name of the Roman Cross.



SHAUGH CROSS.

Near the village of Shaugh, a short distance beyond the church in an easterly direction, where the road divides at the new Vicarage, a cross stands that evidently was erected on the hedge, but which, until recently "restored," appeared as if inserted into it, the growth of vegetation having forced it into a reclining position.

It is square-hewn in granite, and fixed in a flat foot-stone. The arm pointing south had, apparently long since, been broken off.



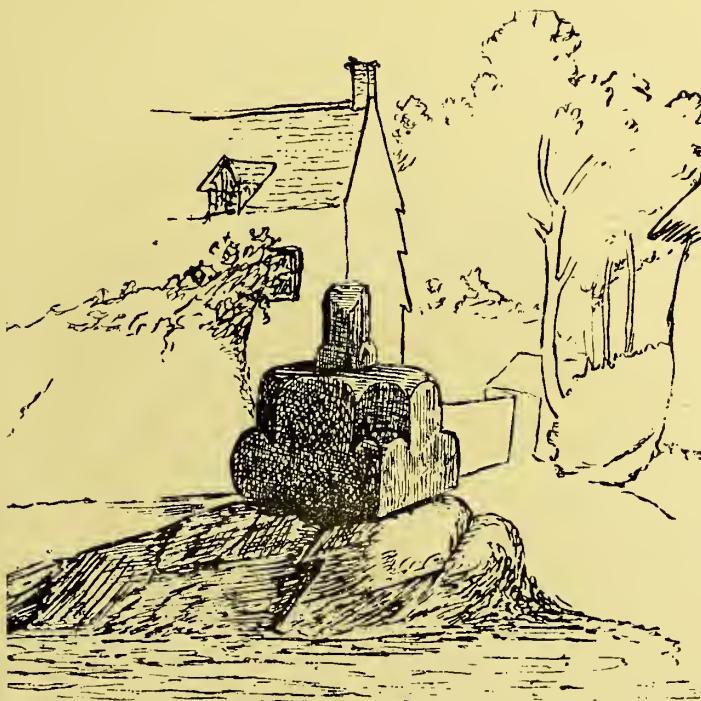
PUGHTOR CROSS.

A cross of the sixteenth century type stands in a bottom between Pughtor and Sampford Tor, probably where the old road from Ashburton over Whitchurch Down divided to go to Horrabridge or Sampford Spiney. It stands about four feet high, and has the angles chamfered.



SHAUGH AND BICKLEIGH CROSS.

On the road from Shaugh to Plympton, where it turns abruptly down to Bickleigh Bridge, stands, amidst a growth of vegetation, the basement-stone—in which the socket may still be seen—of a roadside cross which has long since been removed.

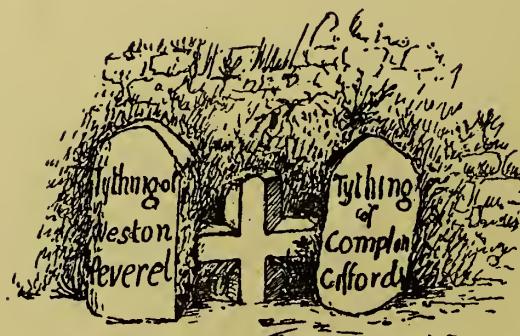


ELBURTON CROSS.

The remains of this cross stand in the village of Elburton, on the road from Plymstock to Brixton, near where it is crossed by roads going from Wembury to Plympton.

A portion of the shaft, which is chamfered at the angles, and the pediment, alone remain. The latter has the angles also cut away for one-half their height; and at the base of the cutting a square hollow is still deeper cut into the stone.

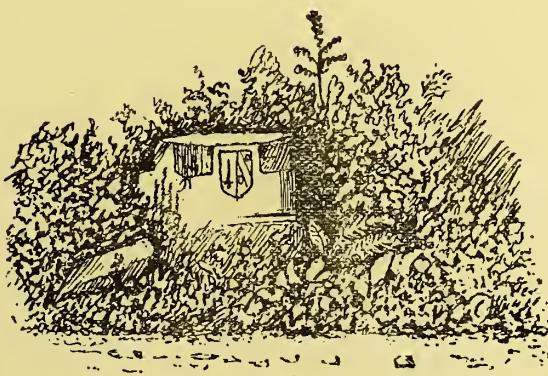
The whole stands upon the natural rock, which here is elevated above the road.



COMPTON CROSS.

On the Tavistock road, two miles out of Plymouth, stands a sixteenth-century cross, the whole but the head being entombed by the elevation of the road and sideway. It stands between two stones, and marks the boundary between the tithing of Compton Gifford and that of Weston Peverel.

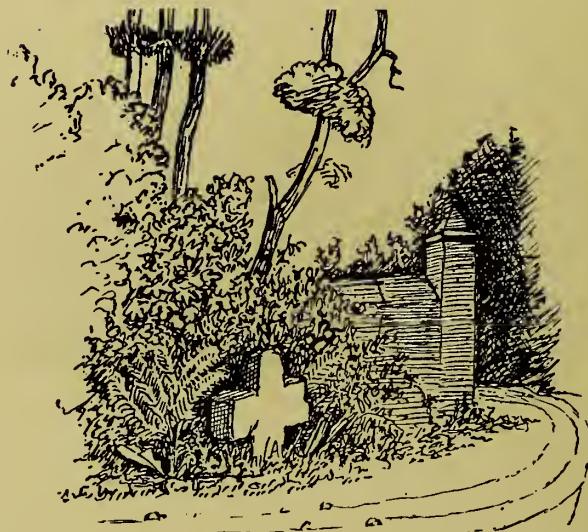
It stands just opposite to the cross-road leading to Pennycross church.



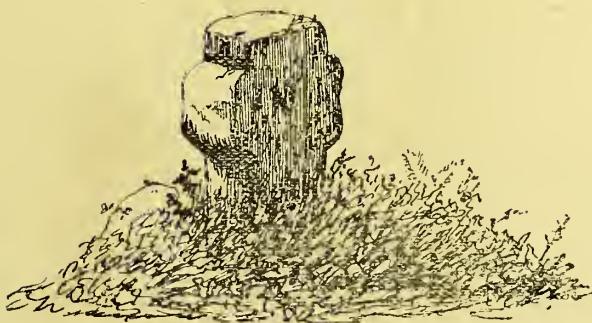
BISHOP'S STONE

On the roadside, against a hedge, stands, near the village of Lustleigh, the basement of a cross that has long since departed. The corners of the stone are chamfered, and on the face is a coat of arms: Dexter, a sword or dagger, proper. Sinister, a bend dexter between what appear to be two balls.

It is known in the locality as the Bishop's Stone.



On the road from Holne to Buckfastleigh is a small granite cross near the gate-entrance to a dwelling-house. The cross is square-cut and plain; it is deeply imbedded in the ground, and leaves only the head exposed. It is probable that it is part of a more perfect cross.



NORTH BOVEY.

On the road from Moretonhampstead to North Bovey, where the road branches to Okehampton, stands what appears to be the upper portion of a square-cut short-armed cross. It is probably only the upper portion of one that was much higher. It has the letter N coarsely engraved on one side, and is surrounded by waste vegetation.



NORTH BOVEY TOWN CROSS.

In the village of North Bovey, surrounded by a grove of trees, not far from the church, stands a granite cross that has a smaller cross embossed upon its front. It stands upon a pediment that has the corners cut away, and projecting bosses left.



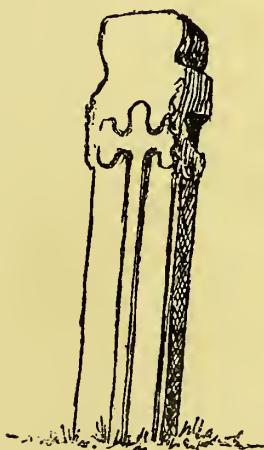
WOODLAND CROSS.

On the village green, outside Woodland church, once stood a sixteenth-century cross. It stood near a grove of trees, one of which in 1869 was blown down, and carried away the cross at its base. When I sketched it the cross existed as shown, but has since been removed. An inhabitant of the parish informs us that until recently the parish meetings were always held around this cross, beneath the trees.



SAMPFORD SPINEY CROSS.

This is a sixteenth-century cross, and stands in a corner of a farmyard just outside the wall of the churchyard. It has the angles chamfered.

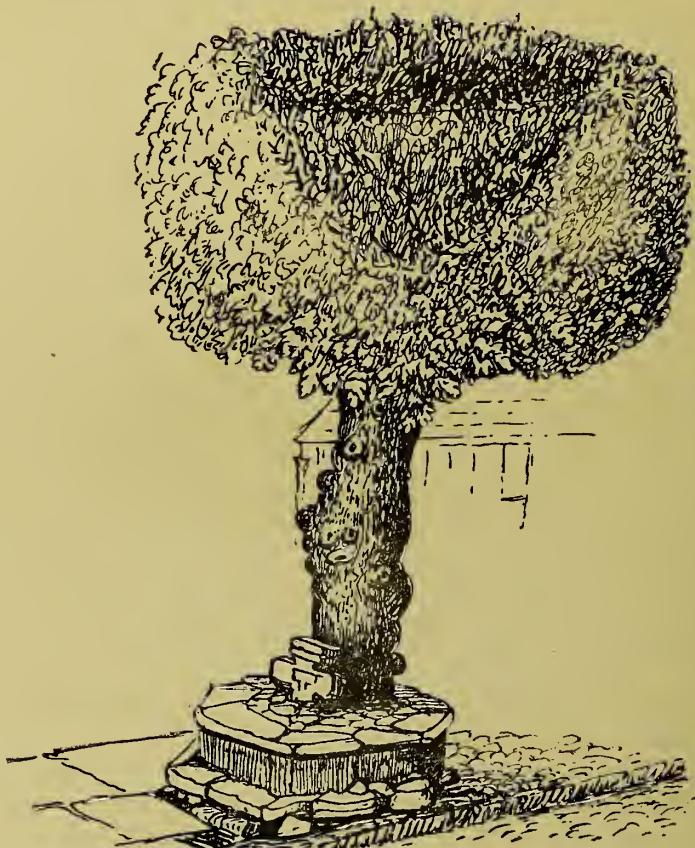


SHEEPSTOR CROSS.

This cross probably stood at one time near the church.

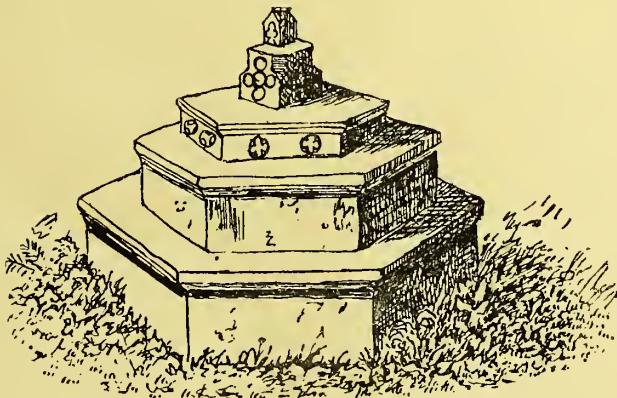
When the members of the Plymouth Institution visited the locality in 1874, it was found with the arms broken off, and placed in the middle of a field, where it was used for cows to rub against.

It has a smaller cross sculptured on its surface, and the angles of the larger one are slightly chamfered.



MORETONHAMPSTEAD CROSS.

Just outside the churchyard gate at Moretonhampstead stands a short cross, which is probably only the head of an original taller one. It stands on an octagonal base built of small stones. Behind it, growing out of the same basement, is a lime tree that has not improbably sprung from a self-sown seed. The tree has the foliage thickly grown, from frequent trimming, and is formed hollow like a wine-glass. It was in this hollow, in the "merrie days of England," when may-pole festivals were common, that the fiddler sat while he scraped his instrument to the joy of those who danced beneath—a custom that was retained until of late years, when people became more circumspect, but whether happier or better is a matter of doubt.



NORTH LEW CROSS.

This cross stands at the north-east of the village green, near the entrance to the churchyard.

“Tradition reports that it dates from the times when the Tavistock preaching monks extended their out-stations beyond Broadbury. After preaching at the cross for a time, the church was commenced. One aisle was built, and then another, and afterwards a third; a richly-carved rood-screen was thrown across the three, and a chancel set in order to correspond. The elaborate and most ornate carving of the north aisle roof points to the Tudor times (say 1450); the brilliant colouring of the screen to 1500. Cranmer’s letter to ‘the men of Devon’ marks the date of the nave seats, all richly carved, finished, and inscribed 1537.”—T. E., *North Lew Rectory*.



HOLNE CROSS.

This cross is in the village of Holne, on the eastern border of Dartmoor, in the rectory of which Charles Kingsley was born. It stands in the churchyard, not far from a fine old yew-tree, on apparently a modern pedestal of three steps. It is a plain granite cross, with the edges chamfered.

In the same churchyard is the following epitaph (now nearly obliterated) over the grave of a local worthy :

“Here lies poor old Ned  
On his last mattrass bed.  
During life he was honest and free:  
He knew well the Chase,\*  
But has now run his race;  
And his name was Collins,  
D’ye see ?

Died Decr., 1780, aged 77.”

\* Holne Chase is in the valley below, in the same parish.



WIDDECOMBE CROSS.

In the churchyard of Widdecombe-in-the-Moor, opposite to the main entrance to the church, is the broken shaft of what appears to be a sixteenth-century cross, standing on a square pedestal, the corners of which are cut away and bossed.

In the space in front of the lych entrance to the churchyard, opposite to some old almshouses, exists what appears to have formed the basement of another cross, but which is now occupied by a young and well-grown tree.

On the eastern side of the churchyard, near the stile, facing outwards, is the head of a cross—probably that of the shaft standing within the yard—built in the wall, being used as a part of the structure.

Fuller gives a description of the end of this church having been struck by lightning in 1638.